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The social message of Jesus





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# The Social Message of Jesus

A COURSE OF TWELVE LESSONS

BY

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## PREFACE

The lessons which follow do not aim to be a course in sociology, nor a discussion, except in an incidental way, of particular social problems. They aim to develop, from a study of His words and His deeds, the message of the great Teacher to His own generation and to every generation. It is hoped that the personal contact with the life and spirit of Jesus which a careful investigation of the theme along the lines laid down will bring to the student will furnish him, not so much with social information as with the disposition and the motive which will make him of use in bringing in the kingdom.

It will be seen that my debt is large to a few books which are well known to every student of the field. The following are suggested as nearest the heart of the theme:

Peabody, *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*.

Shailer Mathews, *The Social Teaching of Jesus*.

Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*.

Cone, *Rich and Poor in the New Testament* is an acute discussion of one phase of the subject, and Campbell's *Christianity and the Social Order*, like Rauschenbusch's volume, makes a study of Jesus' message the basis of an earnest plea for socialism as the completest modern expression of the message. Gladden, *The Church and Modern Life*, and Henderson, *Social Duties from the Christian Point of View*, discuss present-day applications of the

message. For carefully chosen lists of books in this field and related fields the student is referred to Edwards, *Studies in American Social Conditions*, and Strong, *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, Vol. II., 68f.

The use of the American revision of the Bible is recommended. All references are to this edition. The division of the subjects into lessons is along the lines of natural cleavage. It is suggested that individuals or classes work through the material as slowly or as rapidly as their interest may dictate.

The list of those who have helped me with this little volume would be a long one if I should publish the names. I am grateful to all whose encouragement and kindly counsel have helped me to make it what it is.

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Colorado College,  
Colorado Springs, Colo.,  
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## LESSON I

### INTRODUCTION

Every epoch has its dominant interest. To-day the supreme interest of the world is the social question. We see, as our forefathers did not, that everything has its social side; we have found out that no man lives, or can live, in any department of life unto himself alone. There is a social implication in every physical question, every educational question, every economic question, every political question, every moral and religious question. Recognition of this fact is both cause and result of a social interest such as the world has never seen before. The first-hand study of social conditions which has been carried on with such conscientiousness and sympathy during the last few decades has borne its fruit in a deep-seated desire for a wider reign of justice and kindness, the day of the unprivileged for which the world has waited so long.

The change in the attitude of the world toward such questions during a generation has been most astonishing. A generation ago the doctrine of *laissez-faire* was the manifestation in one field of the spirit of the time. "The Book of Daniel Drew," recently published, whether an autobiographical record or a biographical interpretation, uncovers the shame of the same period in the sphere of finance and politics. What this attitude was it had become by a natural evolution. In the Middle Ages

the life of the Christian community was dominated by the Church. There was social solidarity, but under such repression that the individual became merely passive. Then came the great reaction of the Reformation which was fundamentally the assertion of the individual, his right to be, to develop, to exercise authority. In Puritanism this new spirit manifested itself as the recognition that God and the individual soul stand in a supreme relation to one another, in utter isolation. Compared with that relationship the closest ties of family and friendship are as nothing. Bunyan's Christian leaves his wife and children behind when he journeys to the Celestial City. Out of this sense of the importance of the individual, his relationship to his Maker, and the authority of the individual conscience, came into being the multiplicity of religious sects. In the logic of Puritanism there was room for as many sects as there were individuals, but the truth of the Reformation having been mastered, the pendulum began to swing back. The world is returning to the doctrine of social solidarity, but not to that doctrine in its earlier meagerness. It is true that extreme socialism seeks to-day almost the reassertion of the conception of the Middle Ages, an idea of social solidarity which would not merely make the individual passive, but would even suppress him altogether. But we may be sure that any doctrine of society which the world of to-day and of to-morrow will accept must have in it what the centuries of intellectual and moral struggle have won for us, that the individual as well as society is

sacred, and that the only possible solution of the social problem is one which recognizes the mass and the individual as the equally significant poles of social relationship.

Meanwhile who shall teach us the truth about these all-important matters? To whom shall we go for the words of eternal life? In Emerson's day, so he tells us, "not a reading man but has a draft of a new community in his waistcoat pocket."<sup>1</sup> Similarly to-day men of every type of social faith, from the state socialist at one extreme to the anarchist at the other, are offering us their solutions of the social problem. Who has the word of truth?

Jesus Christ has proved His insight into the individual life. He has demonstrated His mastery of the art of "making a life" for Himself and for those who have let Him inspire and lead them. Has He any light upon these social questions, or are they too modern for Him? Many of them are modern in form but they are, after all, only modifications of problems which are as old as humanity. "One and one" creates a social problem. The family, womanhood, childhood, our attitude toward friends, neighbors and those afar off, the acquisition and use of wealth, these and many others like them are problems which in one form or another date from the beginning of the race. Jesus recognized them; they were always in the background, and often in the foreground, of His thought and speech. And it is increasingly the conviction of the world that He alone holds the key to the situa-

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1. *Carlyle-Emerson Correspondence*, Vol. I., p. 334.

tion, that if the social problem is ever to find a solution it will be His solution. He alone has for the world, here as elsewhere, the words of eternal life.

Happily in discussing the social message of Jesus, we have little or no need to discuss speculative or critical questions. We are not concerned here with the metaphysics of Jesus' nature nor with the historicity of all the facts of His life. Without dispute, His is the greatest personality in human history, and we have a right to assume that, in the main at least His life agrees with the record. As John Stuart Mill said long ago, there is a stamp of personal originality about Jesus' words which is its own witness to their genuineness, a fact which will remain after the last word of historical criticism has been spoken. It is our business therefore to try to interpret what Jesus taught. The authority of the teachings will rest upon the teachings themselves which reveal a freshness and sanity and modernness of spirit that must stir in the present-day student the same astonishment which they aroused in those who listened to Him who spoke them so long ago.

But at the outset we are met with the criticism that the very title of the studies we are undertaking, *The Social Message of Jesus*, is a misnomer, that Jesus had nothing to do with social matters, that in fact He kept studiously aloof from them, that the goal of all His work was the transformation not of society but of the individual. The studies themselves must be the refutation of this one-sided interpretation of Jesus' message. It is enough here to say that the ideal of Jesus was the establishment of

a kingdom; He was constantly urging that men do their best to live in right relationships; He discussed with plainness and vigor the primary social institution, the family. And moreover all that part of His teaching which seems at first glance to culminate in the uplift of the individual is really incomplete unless it goes beyond the individual and affects through him the lives of all with whom he is related.

As we study the social message of Jesus certain facts as to His method should constantly be borne in mind.

1. What Professor Peabody has called the "occasionalism" of Jesus' teaching.<sup>1</sup> Jesus was not a preacher in the ordinary sense of the word, not a lecturer upon theological topics, with His material organized into form and presented to His hearers as a whole. His teaching attaches itself to the concrete case. Life is His opportunity and His text. So what He says must be interpreted by reference to the occasion. Like a wise physician, His judgment is always based on the insight of His diagnosis. Without this fact in mind His teaching will often seem inconsistent and even contradictory.<sup>2</sup>

2. Jesus' disavowal of any desire or purpose to legislate upon difficult personal or public questions. A man came to Him asking that He interfere in a family matter and bid his brother divide the inheritance with him. Jesus vigorously refused: "Who made me judge or a divider over you?" and

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1. Peabody, *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character*, p. 74.

2. A good illustration of the different treatment of two cases which resembled one another in a few points will be found by comparing Mark 10: 17-31 with Luke 19: 1-10.

proceeded to uncover the real difficulty, the covetousness of the man's heart (Luke 12:13-15). Certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians sought to crush Him between the millstones of the political situation in Judea in His time. But He refused to be drawn into a discussion of such questions (Mark 12:13-17). In this respect His attitude toward the social and political questions of His time is absolutely unlike that of the great prophets of Old Testament history. They were the leaders of their time in the active discussion and judgment of such questions. The prophetic writings are text books in the study of the social condition of the age in which they were written and they are full of rebuke of luxury, of the oppression of the poor by the rich, of the monopoly and misuse of land, of drunkenness and avarice, of Israel's attitude toward national and international policies.<sup>1</sup> But Jesus rarely discussed these questions—at least directly. He felt He had more fundamental, more far-reaching work to do. Had He given His message in the form of such a solution of these problems as would fit the time, His teachings would have been outgrown with the development of civilization. Because He devoted Himself to the proclamation of principles and the awakening of a new spirit, His influence will be perennial.

“What He taught was not a code of rules but a loving spirit; not truths, but a spirit of truth; not views, but a view.”<sup>2</sup>

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1. Cf. Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, Ch. I.  
2. Robert Louis Stevenson.



## NOTES

## NOTES

## LESSON II

### THE SOCIAL NATURE OF JESUS

Pilate's question, "What is truth?" could not have been better answered than he answered it himself when he placed Jesus before the multitude and said, "Behold the Man!"<sup>1</sup> Christianity is not a system of abstract truth, but the incarnation of truth, the manifestation of truth in the deeds and spirit of human lives.

"And so the Word had breath, and wrought  
With human hands the creed of creeds  
In loveliness of perfect deeds."<sup>2</sup>

The fundamental social message of Jesus is therefore to be found not in what He said, but in what He was. His words interpreted for men the spirit of His own life. To understand what He taught, then, we must come to know Him as He moved in and out among men, sharing their joys and sorrows, their labor and their rest, and glorifying all by the atmosphere of His own spirit. We must study first His attitude toward the social life of His day.

1. Jesus drew a contrast between Himself and His forerunner, John the Baptist, Matt. 11:18, 19 (Luke 7:33, 34). From a study of the entire passage, Matt. 11:2-19 (Luke 7:18-35), and such passages as Luke 1:15-17; Matt. 3:1-12; Luke 3:1-20, answer the following questions:

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1. J. Monro Gibson, *Sermons*.  
2. Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, XXXVI.

(1) To what type of life was John consecrated at his birth?

(2) Where had John's home been before his ministry began? What had been his manner of life, his clothing, food, etc.?

(3) Before his ministry, what had been his attitude toward the life of his time, and what was it during his ministry, e.g., toward those who came to consult him at the Jordan? toward Herod?

(4) What was John's social message?

(5) What does Jesus mean to imply about His own relationship to the life of His time, in contrast with John's?

2. Accepting Jesus' suggestion as to His own relationship to His fellows, let us study Him as the records reveal Him to us in the midst of the surroundings in which He grew up and in which He labored.

(1) His home. Where was it? Luke 2:39. What were the characteristics of the place? John 1:46 has often been quoted in support of the theory that the village was unwholesome morally, but probably Nathanael was wondering how such a leader as the Messiah could come out of such an obscure place. The community was a small one, but it was on one of the caravan roads from Damascus to Egypt, and from the hills about could be seen the Mediterranean and its ships. So the great world was in sight of the boy Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

For the characteristics of a typical Jewish home

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1. George Adam Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, pp. 432-435.

of the class in which Jesus was brought up, see Stapfer, *Palestine in the Time of Jesus*, Book I., Ch. VII., VIII.

How large was the family? How many brothers and sisters were there? What is the last mention of Joseph in the New Testament? Luke 2:48; Matt. 13:54-56; Mark 6:1-3. The suggestion of these passages implies what as to the extent of Jesus' responsibility in the home? What were the characteristics of the mother of Jesus? Luke 1:26-38, 46-55; 2:19, 48-51; Mark 3:31-35;<sup>1</sup> 15:40; John 2:1-5; 19:25.

Does Luke 2:43-49 throw any light upon the home training?

How sympathetic were the family with Him and His work? Mark 3:21, 31; John 7:3-6; Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:7; Gal. 1:19.

(2) His occupation. Again cf. Matt. 13:55 and Mark 6:3. How did Jesus' occupation relate Him to the community life? Contrast Him in this particular with John the Baptist. Does John 8:29 include in its scope the carpenter period?

(3) His interest in social festivities. Jesus did not hold Himself aloof from the friendly gatherings in which the social spirit principally manifested itself. Note some of the occasions when He shared in them. Mark 2:14-17; 14:12-26; Luke 7:36; 14:1; 15:1, 2; 19:1-10; 24:29-31; John 2:1-11; 12:2-8.

(4) His attendance upon Church festivities. In His personal relation to the Jewish worship Jesus

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1. Mark 3:21 is thought by some to belong with 3:31-35.

showed His purpose was not to destroy but to fulfill. He was loyal alike to the synagogue and to the temple. Christianity is an evolution out of Judaism, a historical growth, not a magical gift to the world. Luke 2:41-51; Mark 14:12-17; John 2:13; 5:1; 7:2, 10; 12:12-15.

(5) His frequent association with crowds. During His ministry, except at certain periods of retirement, He was almost continually thronged with the sick and those who were eager to hear His message. Mark 2:1, 2, 13; 3:20; 11:8-10; 15:29-31; Luke 3:21; 4:42; 23:27; John 6:2 and many other passages.

(6) The breadth of His social affinities. The ease with which He put Himself on good terms with the multitudes reveals the complete absence of the spirit of social exclusiveness. Nor did He have the class feeling that would prompt a man to consort merely with the poor. He cut through society "not horizontally, but perpendicularly." He seems equally at home with rich and poor, cultivated and uncultivated, saint and sinner, with persons of all ages, sexes and nationalities. Note in the following passages some of the individuals and groups with whom He associated. Matt. 8:5; 9:9; Mark 1:16-20 (cf. verse 20 with John 18:15, 16); 5:22; 7:26; 10:13-16, 17-22, 46-52; Luke 5:12, 17-26; 7:36-50; 8:1-3; 14:1; 15:1; 19:5-7; John 3:1, 2; 4:27 (cf. old and revised versions); 4:46; 12:1, 2, 20, 21; 19:38-42.

(7) His friendships. Jesus evidently had cravings which even the consciousness of a great mis-

sion could not satisfy. He longed for human sympathy and the sustaining help of friends. There is a note of deep personal sadness in John 6:67. There were circles of persons of varying nearness to the center of His friendly affection in the multitude of the disciples, the Twelve with a few women, a group of three disciples, and at the center "the beloved disciple." There were homes in which He was always welcome, notably the Bethany circle. Mark 3:13-19; 5:37; 14:33; Luke 8:1-3; 10:38-42; John 11:1-44; 12:1-8; 19:26; 21:7, 20; cf. Acts 1:13, 14.

It has been suggested that this preference of Jesus for a small group of the disciples was the cause of the frequent dissensions among them. Matt. 20:20-28; Luke 22:24-30. Some interpreters believe the ambition of the sons of Zebedee and their mother was due to a kinship between them and Jesus, a conjecture suggested by a comparison of John 19:25 with Matt. 27:56 and Mark 15:40. There is no proof of this interesting theory.

(8) His work. This was done almost wholly in a social environment.

(a) His works of healing were usually performed, not in out-of-the-way places, but in the presence of others, often of a multitude. Matt. 12:9-14; 15:29-31; Mark 1:23-28; Mark 5:25-34; 9:14-27; 10:46-52; Luke 5:17-26; 13:10-17; John 5:2-9; 9:1-7.

(b) His teaching, too, was in a social environment. It was, as a rule, not contained in set discourses, but consisted of words spoken man to man.

Its method was "the case system." A human need or a human problem met Him; His treatment of the individual case contained in it the universal principle. Matt. 8: 5-13; 18: 21-35; Mark 7: 1-23; 9: 33-37; Luke 7: 18-35; 10: 25-37; 12: 13-21; 15: 1-32; John 4: 7-42; 6: 1-59.

Are the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7), the instructions to the Twelve and to the Seventy (Matt. 10: 5-42; Luke 10: 1-24), the parables in Matt. 13, the discourses in Matt. 24 and 25, exceptions to the above statements?

(c) Once, at least, Jesus took an active part in the work of social reform. John 2: 13-22; Matt. 21: 12-17.<sup>1</sup>

(9) His spirit. Jesus not only lived and worked in the midst of men and women, but He always had uppermost in His mind the desire to be of use to them. A good motto of His life is to be found in John 17: 19. He came in the spirit of service. John 13: 2-17. To be of service He sought to be in sympathetic relations with all men and He was constantly urging His disciples to break down the barriers between themselves and their fellows. It is remarkable how often He inculcated the spirit of forgiveness (Matt. 5: 23, 24; 6: 12-15; 18: 15-35; Mark 11: 25; Luke 17: 1-4), an attitude which He illustrated fully in His own life (Luke 23: 34). Nothing could have been more striking, too, than the patience with which He waited for the slow development of the disciples and meanwhile bore

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1. For a discussion of the question whether there occurred one or two cleansings of the temple, see Rhees, *The Life of Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 109.



with their misunderstandings and their jealous bickerings. Matt. 20: 20-28; Luke 22: 24-30.

The above study reveals the fact that Jesus was not a being exalted to a lofty position above the life of His time and ministering to it from without, but that He was "found in fashion as a man," and lived in the midst of men, vitalizing them by His contact with them in the daily relationships of life. He did not preach down to them from a pulpit. He shared life with them and taught them through the questions and the experiences which they brought to Him. Thus His truth, His character and His spirit became "the leaven" which has been slowly but surely since His time leavening the lump of human life.

## NOTES

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### LESSON III

#### THE SOCIAL IDEAL OF JESUS

Every great movement has great ideas out of which it grows, which dominate its development. A historical movement, like a person, to be largely influential must have a creed, something it believes in and ardently wishes and works to bring to pass. Jesus, too, did not seek to transform the world by haphazard deeds of helpfulness. His work had an intellectual center, an idea and ideal to which it was pointing and by which it was guided and controlled.

Like every other great teacher, Jesus had one comprehensive theme into which He gathered the whole of His message, which gave unity and coherence to all His utterances, occasional though they were, and directed to cases of individual need rather than arranged in a system. This theme was the subject of His first preaching. The imprisonment of John seems to have been the signal to Jesus that the time had come for the formal opening of His work, so, as the prison doors closed upon the prophet, Jesus, catching up the message of the forerunner which had expressed in itself the longing of the nation, announced Himself with the words: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe in the gospel."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Mark 1:15; Mark and Luke use the expression, "kingdom of God," Luke 6:20; Matthew, "kingdom of heaven," 4:17. Neither expression occurs in John. Instead we have there the phrase "eternal life," expressing the quality of life which faith in Jesus

Jesus' ideal of the kingdom had its definite relation to the conception which had been developing through the centuries of Jewish history. The growth of this conception may be summarized as follows:

Man was made in the image of God and given the dominion over all creatures. To secure his true place he must be obedient to Jehovah. Through disobedience sin enters the world and battles with the good in man, the promise being that the good shall in the end triumph. Jehovah comes into peculiar relationship with Israel, abiding in the nation and fulfilling His promises in it. He brings it into its own land and there becomes Father, Husband and Shepherd of His people, relations which become increasingly tender as the years pass. A kingdom develops of which Jehovah is King, which is to be victorious over all enemies. The victory is postponed by the sins of Judah and Israel, but the delay is only temporary. The Day of Jehovah will come in which He will bless Israel with redemption and will punish all its enemies. The nation has become enslaved but Jehovah will not leave it desolate. He is represented by the faithful, suffering prophet who by his heroism and self-sacrifice wins for himself and for his people the reward of deliverance and exaltation at the hands of Jehovah. Side by side with the growth of the conception of the prophet is developing that of the ideal King,

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develops. John 6: 40, 47; 17: 3. There is no ground for a common misapprehension that the phrase, "kingdom of heaven," is equivalent to "heaven." It means the Messianic kingdom, begun and developed on earth, consummated in the completed work of the Messiah here and in the heavenly life.

Jehovah's Son, greater than David, Who shall bring peace to the world by overthrowing His enemies and restoring Israel to the highest place among the nations, where she shall become the channel of Jehovah's blessing to all mankind. And the people, redeemed and restored, will have a new relation to Jehovah, Who shall write His law henceforth not on tables of stone but on the fleshly tables of the heart.<sup>1</sup>

Thus had the national ideal been shaping itself under the influence of the people's longing and the genius of creative minds. It has often been pointed out that while the golden age of Greece and Rome was behind those nations, the golden age of Israel was in the future, not something lost never to be regained, but something to be attained and held as a perpetual blessing. And this blessing is not to be the selfish possession of one race. In Abraham all nations of the earth are to be blessed (Gen. 22:18). When Jehovah's house is established on the top of the mountains all nations shall flow unto it (Isa. 2:2). The completion of the Messiah's kingdom is to be the consummation of human history.

In the time of Jesus the Messianic hope was taking form in two movements:

1. Popular revolutionary Messianism. The explanation of this outburst of national feeling was

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1. Condensed from Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*, Ch. XV.

A few of the passages upon which the above is based are the following: Gen. 1:26-30; 3:14, 15; 22:15-18; Ex. 19:3-6; Deut. 18:16-19; 2 Sam. 7:10-16; Ps. 21, 22 and 72; Joel 3:9-21; Amos 9:9-15; Hosea 11:8-11; Isa. 2:2-4; 7:13-17; 9:6, 7; 11; 63:1-6; 35, 52 and 53, 60, 61; Zech. 14; Micah 5:2-4; Jer. 31:27-40; Ezek. 17:22-24; 34:11-31; 36:25-36.

the poverty and suffering of the masses of the people. To them in their need the coming of the kingdom seemed too long deferred, and they sought to "force the hand of Jehovah" by armed revolts against the government. Their ideal was "a peasant high priest, a new state, a new people, and no king but God. . . . Its members believed that if once they could organize an independent republic, during its struggle with Rome the Messiah Himself would come to their aid."<sup>1</sup> This form of Messianism began to be prominent about the time of the death of Herod the Great, and during the first century there were a number of attempts, chiefly on the part of the Zealots, to realize the ideal of an independent kingdom. Suggestions of these insurrections are to be found in such passages as Mark 13: 22 (Matt. 24: 11, 24); Acts 5: 34-39; 21: 38.

2. Pharisaic Messianism. This form of the Messianic hope was fashioned in the study rather than on the field. It was developed by men who did not feel the immediate burden of a crushing poverty. During the Maccabean days the Pharisaic party had had political hopes, but with the complete subjection of Israel to Rome these were transformed into religious longings. God was the founder and guardian of the nation. His plan was behind its development and some day He would fulfill His promises. But He was not to be hurried; force could not hasten the issue; all would come

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1. Mathews, *The Messianic Hope in the New Testament*, pp. 19, 20. This book is a very valuable and interesting discussion of the theme of this lesson and to it the writer is largely indebted. The student is also referred to Cone, *Rich and Poor in the New Testament*, Ch. III., for a careful presentation of the same subject.



out right in His own time. Men must trust Him and patiently wait His will. Meanwhile a creed developed, an interpretation of what would happen when God was ready. The following were the principal articles:

(1) There are, in God's plan, two ages—"this age," evil, under the control in part at least of Satan, and "the coming age," the good time ahead of the nation and the world, to be introduced by a catastrophe, beginning and establishing the rule of Jehovah.

(2) The new kingdom will be limited to Jews; it will involve a judgment upon the enemies of Israel. It will not come as an evolution, but as the free gift of God.

(3) The righteous dead will share in this kingdom by a resurrection.

(4) A personal Messiah will be king of this kingdom, announced, as some writers thought, by a forerunner, Elijah.

Such being the thought of the Jews in Jesus' day in these two opposing camps, we must now ask, How far did Jesus share the thought of His time? From a study of the following passages try to determine the extent to which He subscribed to the positions of the Zealots and the Pharisees and how far He rejected them. John 18:36, 37; Mark 10:29, 30; Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43; Luke 10:18; 22:31, 53; John 12:31; Luke 12:32; Mark 12:18-27; Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:28, 29; Mark 8:27-30; 11:1-11 (Matt. 21:4, 5); 14:61, 62; Matt. 11:2-6 [cf. Isa. 61:1-3]; 11:10; 17:10-13.

Is there any part of the Pharisaic creed which Jesus seems distinctly to reject? Matt. 8:11, 12; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 4:25-27; 13:28-30.<sup>1</sup>

The framework of Jesus' thought was evidently inherited, and inherited from Pharisaism. We are accustomed to think that the only relation between Jesus and the Pharisees was one of hostility. His harshest criticisms are directed against them. But may it not have been true that the reason why He was so hostile in some points was that He sympathized with the Pharisaic party so fully in others? He saw their great opportunity; He saw how far they had gone toward the truth; He saw, too, how their thought and spirit had hardened into tradition, how the reality of their religious life was dying out. By the lashing of His intense words, by His exposure of their selfishness and their hypocrisy, He hoped to quicken to a new and better life the spirit that was dying in them. No one who studies the religious parties of the time of Jesus can doubt that His sympathies were most fully with the Pharisees. They were the preservers of what was best in the national spirit. In their faith Jesus had no doubt been brought up, and to them His appeal was made for leadership toward a better national development.

In Lesson II. we found Jesus a part of the social life of His time, not on a pedestal, nor in a pulpit, but a man among men. In the above study we have

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1. An interesting question for which there is no place here for an adequate discussion is, Did Jesus believe in an external apocalyptic kingdom, or is His language figurative? See Shailer Mathews, *Messianic Hope*, p. 67f.

been finding Him a part also of its intellectual life. He grew up among the intellectual conceptions of His land and of His age just as He shared in the social customs and conventions of those among whom He lived. Does it lower Him in our conception to discover this fact about Him? Every great religious movement starts on the plane of the intellectual life of the nation. It does not first utterly drive out the old and supplant it with the new. It starts with the old and leavens it with the new.<sup>1</sup> In the same way a great religious leader is not an iconoclast, but a builder. He does not seek to tear down but to build up, to fulfill, not to destroy. So he starts with what he finds, but inter-fuses with it something which at last transforms the old into the new.

What was the new which Jesus interfused with the inherited conceptions and traditions of Judaism? The form of His social ideal, as has been said, was inherited, but His ideal includes something more vital than its form. Its essence was far from being an inheritance.

(1) The Jews thought of the kingdom as a military rule which should subdue the whole earth. Was this Jesus' idea? John 18:36, 37. In the temptation (Matt. 4:1-11) what was Jesus tempted to do?

(2) When, according to Jesus' teaching, does the kingdom become a reality? Matt. 5:3-10;

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1. For a good illustration of this fact see Stopford Brooke, *Early English Literature*, Ch. XI. It is significant that many of our Christmas customs are pre-Christian and that the name of our chief Christian festival, Easter, is derived from that of a heathen goddess.

12:28; Mark 10:14; Luke 10:9; 17:20, 21 (see margin).

(3) What is the spirit of the kingdom? Matt. 6:12-15; 25-34; 23:8-12; Mark 10:42-45; Luke 10:25-37; 14:25-35; John 18:36, 37.

(4) How is the kingdom to develop within? Matt. 13:33.

(5) How is the kingdom to develop without? Matt. 13:31, 32.

(6) What was the fundamental fact in Jesus' thought of Himself as the Messiah? Mark 8:27-9:1; Luke 22:27; John 13:1-5; 17:19.

Thus Jesus was seeking, as the goal of His effort, the perfecting of a social order in which all men are brothers, because they are children of a common Father, bound together in the spirit of loving service, a social relationship in which He is supreme because He is fullest of the spirit of the kingdom. While the externals and the phraseology of the kingdom are those which were familiar to the Jews of His time, the spirit in which He sought to launch it and which He was to pass on to others, by possessing which, and in no other way, they would become members of it—this spirit was new, and by the contagion of its influence He foresaw the kingdom would advance and spread until it should reach to the remotest corner of the earth and transform every human relationship. Its consummation would be in the heavenly life, but not until the city of God had come down to earth and earth had become itself a heaven.

## NOTES

## NOTES

## LESSON IV

### THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PERSONAL TEACHING OF JESUS

Having now gained some understanding of Jesus in His social relations and of the ideal which was behind His work, let us come a little nearer to the teaching itself. This is usually separated, for convenience of treatment, into two sections, the personal teaching and the social teaching, but fundamentally they are one and inseparable. The personal teaching of Jesus is simply His teaching turned in the direction of the individual, and His social teaching, that same teaching turned in the direction of the relation of individuals in social life. These two aspects of Jesus' message are two sides of the same shield; both are needed to give the complete significance of His word to men. In the next three lessons the attempt will be made to show how inseparable are these two aspects, how they blend in almost every utterance of Jesus.

Professor Peabody, who has written so wisely upon the principles which must lie at the basis of any right settlement of the social question, says: The ethics of the Bible "are, as a rule, personal; yet the consequences of its ethics are, as a rule, social. . . . To plant in the soil of the world the strong seed of the Christian character was to be certain of an abundant harvest of social consequences."<sup>1</sup> If this is true of the teaching of the Bible, as a whole, it is emphatically true of the mes-

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1. *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character*, pp. 196, 197.

sage of Jesus. To test the validity of Professor Peabody's words, let us study broadly certain characteristic teachings of Jesus to discover how in them the personal and the social mingle, how the personal cannot be confined to the individual but has its bearing upon all the relationships of the individual in society.

1. The Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5-7.

5:3-12. The Beatitudes. These should be placed almost at the center of the personal teaching of Jesus. But what is the source of the happiness promised? The "for" clauses seem to be variations in the Hebrew manner of the same thought. For example, it would be just as true to say, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," as to say, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for *theirs* is the kingdom of heaven." If this is so, the personal blessedness is complete only in what sphere?

5:13-16. Personal or social teaching?

5:17-32. This passage suggests definitely the theme of the Sermon on the Mount, the righteousness of members of the kingdom in contrast with the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Is the theme personal or social? What then is the motive which Jesus suggests for the cultivation of Christian righteousness? Anger, lust, are personal sins to be eradicated from the individual character, but do they stop with the individual?<sup>1</sup> The accept-

1. The offense in 5:22 is the same under different forms—"angry," "Raca," "fool"—each an expression of anger. The punishments form a rhetorical climax. Anger deserves the judgment; it deserves a still severer punishment, the council; it deserves even the Gehenna of fire.



ance of the individual's worship is dependent upon what? (Cf. Matt. 6:12.)

5:33-37. Jesus is evidently discussing a matter of personal practice here, but what was the purpose of the oath? How do you reconcile this teaching with Jesus' practice in Matt. 26:63, 64? As is well known, the Quakers have followed the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount here as elsewhere literally. Such is their character for truthfulness that their affirmation is accepted by the courts as of the same validity as an oath.

5:38-48. The first few verses of this section are among the most difficult to interpret of all Jesus' utterances. The principle laid down here is the same which Paul enunciates in Romans 12:21, that of "love yielding and putting to shame in the spirit of self-denial." But for us to interpret Jesus' illustration of the principle as a rule of practice on all occasions would be to introduce moral confusion into human relationships. "This principle of Christian morality, laid down absolutely as an ideal, by no means excludes, under the determining circumstances of sinful life, the duty of seeking one's legal rights, as is clear moreover from the history of Christ and His Apostles." (*Meyer's Commentary on Matthew* 5:38.) See John 18:22, 23; Acts 16:35-39; 23:3; 25:9-11.

But whatever may be the exact interpretation, the whole passage discusses the attitude of the Christian in what sphere? The appeal is made to whose example and to what in that example?

6:1-18. This passage discusses the Christian

attitude toward alms, prayer and fasting. The essential point in the discussion is noted in verse 1; in what phrase? Is the Lord's Prayer a purely personal prayer? Is "our" a social word, or simply a plural, used because Jesus was giving this prayer to a number of people? How many of the petitions can, by the most liberal interpretation, be limited to the personal sphere? What disposition in us is recognized in the prayer as the ground of our acceptance with God?

6:19-34. This passage will be taken up later in connection with Jesus' teaching about wealth. From what standpoint is the subject of the amassing of wealth treated? What is the key verse of the section, and what is the key phrase in that verse?

7:1-12. The opening verses of this section are clearly in the social sphere. They are another statement of the words, which, as has been said, may be considered a life motto of Jesus Himself (John 17:19). This suggests the question, How far can morality be a personal matter? Would morality be a requirement of a human being if he were alone in the world? If God and our fellows were blotted out, could there be such a thing as morality?

Following out the suggestion of this passage, what should our belief in the goodness of God lead us to? What then is the philosophical basis of the Golden Rule? What word in the verse (7:12) indicates this? Can a man, then, be a follower of the Golden Rule and not be a religious man?

7:13, 14. The Christian pilgrim moves forward

along the straightened way with companions in front, behind and by his side. If Bunyan were writing *Pilgrim's Progress* to-day, would he let Christian desert his family in the City of Destruction and make his pilgrimage alone?<sup>1</sup> Though obedience to Jesus is superior to the claims of every human relationship, is not the scene in Acts 16:34 truer to the essential spirit of Christianity than Bunyan's interpretation?

7:15-27. Jesus' teaching in the Sermon issues in this practical exhortation. Life is the test of profession. What are the fruits to be borne, the deeds to be done? Study Matt. 25:31-46 as a commentary upon the meaning of such verses as 21-23.

Looking back over the Sermon on the Mount, what proportion of it should you say deals with strictly personal teaching? How much of the personal teaching can be considered as not going beyond the individual in its implication?

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1. p. 8.

## NOTES

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## LESSON V

### THE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE PERSONAL TEACHING OF JESUS

(Continued)

2. Jesus' great summary of the Law. Matt. 22: 34-40 (Mark 12: 28-34). Cf. also Luke 10: 25-37. The first half of the summary is quoted from Deut. 6: 5, the second half from Lev. 19: 18. Jesus' profound study of the Old Testament and His insight into its deeper meaning are well illustrated by His choice of these two passages from different books to form a unified and comprehensive statement of Scripture teaching.

The fundamental article in Jesus' creed and message is the Fatherhood of God. This fact calls for what response in us? What is it to "love" God? The New Testament has two words for "love"—*phileo* and *agapao*—the first, the love of kindred and friends, love of the emotions; the second, the love of moral choice, love of the will. The second is the word used of our attitude toward God and Jesus. Does this distinction throw any light upon the meaning of "love" to God? What is it to love God with the heart, with the soul, with the mind, with the strength?

What is the full implication of loving God? What is the relation of the second part of Jesus' summary to the first? Cf. 1 John 4: 20. Who, according to Jesus' interpretation, is our "neighbor"? How inclusive in Jesus' thought is Christian brotherhood? For the comprehension of His thought by His fol-

lowers, see Acts 17:26; Gal. 3:28; 1 Peter 2:17a. Who is our "neighbor" in the United States, waiting to be helped by us in the spirit of Christian brotherhood?

In the scene, the description of which is added to the Fourth Gospel [John 21], is a practical illustration of the union, as Jesus saw it, of the two parts of the summary. "Lovest thou me?" he three times asks the repentant Peter. And when the answer comes, "Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee," Jesus adds, as the necessary conclusion of genuine love, "Tend my lambs," "Feed my sheep."

3. The two great paradoxes of Jesus' teaching.

(1) Mark 8:35 (Matt. 10:39; 16:25; Luke 9:24), the paradox of sacrifice. Jesus is pointing out that there is only one avenue by which the possibilities of character can be realized. Does self-renunciation or self-denial express what He means? What is the distinction to be drawn between the two? David Livingstone pointed out in an address to Scotch students that the sacrifices of the missionary life are not essentially different from, nor in reality any greater than, those which are made by soldiers, explorers, seekers after wealth.<sup>1</sup> The

1. "Hundreds of young men annually leave our shores as cadets. All their friends rejoice when they think of them as bearing the commission of our Queen. When any dangerous expedition is planned by government, more volunteers apply than are necessary to man it. . . . And what thousands rushed to California from different parts of America on the discovery of gold! . . . How many Christian men tore themselves away from all home endearments to suffer, and toil, and perish of cold and starvation on the overland route! . . . Yet no word of sacrifices there. And why should we so regard all we give and do for the Well-beloved of our souls? Our talk of sacrifices is ungenerous and heathenish."

Quoted Blackie, *The Personal Life of David Livingstone*, pp. 476, 477.



value of sacrifice depends altogether upon the motive. A man may sacrifice for the basest as well as for the best ends.

Does Jesus' principle apply only to character development? Can you see any relation of it to art, literature, scientific research, etc.? Is it not true that only he who has learned to forget himself can be fully himself as a painter or a poet? The man who constantly sees himself in his work, who is thinking of personal distinction, is producing second-grade work. Self-consciousness is the bane of the highest effort. Only the man who can find a work big enough to command all his powers and can lose himself in it will be all he can be for the world, or for his own self-development.

A young woman in one of our western colleges was anxious to be a foreign missionary. She was not strong physically, she seemed to have no aptitude for foreign languages, and her friends tried to dissuade her from her determination. But there was a great desire of helpfulness in her heart and she found an outlet for it in a remote district of the Turkish Empire. Spurred on by her love she was able to get an almost incredible amount of service out of her weak body, and, what was stranger still, she became a linguist, able to speak and write in several languages. When the great massacre of the Armenians was in progress, the soldiers came one day to force an entrance into her girls' school. She met them at the door and told them that the only way they could get in was over her dead body. They fell back and the girls she loved were saved.

By forgetting herself in love for a needy world, Corinna Shattuck became a saint, a hero, a never-to-be-forgotten instrument in the up-building of Christian civilization in the East.

A recent putting of Jesus' paradox is to be found in Professor Royce's *The Philosophy of Loyalty*: "A loyal man is one who has found and who sees . . . some social cause, or some system of causes, so rich, so well knit, and to him so fascinating and withal so kindly in its appeal to his natural self-will, that he says to his cause: 'Thy will is mine and mine is thine. In thee I do not lose but find myself, living intensely in proportion as I live for thee.'"<sup>1</sup>

Indeed Professor Royce's book is little more than the exposition and application of this paradox of Jesus.

(2) Matt. 20:26, 27. The paradox of service. This is really a corollary of the first. For other statements of the same truth see Matt. 23:11; Mark 9:35; 10:43, 44; Luke 22:25, 26. At the Last Supper Jesus gave an object lesson of what He meant, John 13:1-17. The reason why He did this was no doubt His knowledge of the jealousy and dissension among the Twelve as pictured in Luke 22:24-30. They were expecting an earthly kingdom and they wanted positions of prominence in it.

State in your own words the principle He is trying to set forth.

So in Jesus' view, character becomes what it is

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1. p. 43.

by virtue of its relation to the lives of others. Read again John 17:19. According to Matt. 25:31-46 what is to be the basis of the judgment? Is this consistent with Matt. 5:21, 22, 27, 28?

It is suggestive to put side by side with Jesus' teaching the words of His best interpreter, Paul. See in Gal. 5:22, 23 his summary of the personal Christian virtues. How many of these are self-centered? Cf. also 1 Cor. 13, especially 13:13.

"Faith, hope, love, all the graces and qualities of the spiritual life are social. They lead the individual out of himself into relations with others."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Hyde, *Outlines of Social Theology*, p. 175.

It is natural to think of Christian joy as a merely personal virtue. But the following shows its social bearing: "At the very heart of this mystery of conversion is a wild joy. A soul consciously unhappy has become consciously happy. A soul bound and in prison has been loosed and is free. . . . The enchanted felicity which sends this man singing and marching into the slums is not only the token of the miracle in himself, but is the magic, as my book shows over and over again, which draws unhappy and dejected souls to make surrender of their sin and wretchedness." Begbie, *Twice-born Men*, p. 20.

## NOTES

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## LESSON VI

### THE PERSONAL BASIS OF JESUS' SOCIAL TEACHING

Our study thus far has brought us to the position that in Jesus' teaching what concerns the individual really reaches out and includes those with whom the individual stands in relationship. But though Jesus' personal teaching thus inevitably widens out and includes the social sphere, one of the most striking characteristics of His career was its "aloofness" from the social and political problems of His day.<sup>1</sup> There was an abundance of these problems—the corruption of government, the iniquity of taxation, slavery, low business and home standards, the degradation of womanhood, etc. Jesus, in His teaching, sometimes comes near these problems. Note His approach to some in the following passages:

Matt. 20: 25; 22: 17-21; 25: 14-30; 26: 11; Mark 10: 2-12; 12: 13-17, 41-44; Luke 5: 27-32; 6: 20, 21; 7: 36-50; 10: 30-37; 12: 13-21; 18: 2-5; 19: 1-10; John 4: 16-18. What are some of the problems involved here, and how does Jesus meet them?

The question has already been asked, Would it not have been an advantage if Jesus had taken up the pressing problems of His time and definitely enlightened people about them? How much help He could have given, we think. But Jesus' work

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1. p. 12.

was fundamental, not merely symptomatic. He was after causes, lying out of sight in human character, not mere results in the surface of society. He knew that if He could solve the problem of the individual, the problem of society would be solved. Environment is a most potent influence in the development of human character; no fact is revealed more clearly than this by modern expert study of social conditions. No character can reach absolute completeness except in a perfect society. But at bottom it is not good society which makes good individuals. The quality of society is ultimately determined by the quality of the individuals who make it up.

Jesus saw this fact with the greatest clearness. While He was seeking to establish a kingdom, the kingdom was the goal of His effort and not its beginning. "He was not primarily the deviser of a social system, but the quickener of single lives."<sup>1</sup> Indeed the kingdom always comes when an individual bows to the sceptre of the King of the kingdom, and it will come in its fullness when all men have accepted, within and without, His rule.

According to Jesus, then, where is to be found the solution of every social problem? Study the following: Matt. 5:3-12, 13, 14, 23, 24, 43-48; 10:7, 8, 34-39; 22:34-40; 23:8-12; 25:34-40; Mark 3:31-35; 10:13-16, 43-44; Luke 10:25-37; 12:22-34; 15:1-32.

Jesus' creed was a simple one. A just and loving Father is seeking to establish His kingdom in the

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1. Peabody, *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 90.



earth. That it may be a kingdom such as He can approve, He seeks to develop individual citizens who shall be worthy of places in the kingdom, men and women who shall express His own spirit of truth and love. In the realization of this spirit in the individual life, the citizens of the kingdom will discover that they are all brethren, and in the realization of the spirit of brotherhood will be found the solution of every problem which can arise out of their relations one to another.

It will be seen thus that Christianity is not in any sense a transaction, something wrought out independently of those who are to share in it. The only salvation that is worth anything is one which saves from sin to a character like that of Jesus Christ. Paul is agonizing until Christ be *formed in* His disciples (Gal. 4: 19), not until they shall express their assent to certain intellectual or moral positions, but until they *become* Jesus Christ, until His spirit bears in their character the fruits of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, kindness, self-control. Just as Jesus Himself incarnates the spirit of God, so every true follower of Him will in turn incarnate His spirit.

We are now ready to consider the question, How in Jesus' estimation is the kingdom to advance? What is the unit of social force?

1. As has already been pointed out,<sup>1</sup> the Messianic ideal held by many in Jesus' own time included the idea of the advance of the kingdom by force. The Messiah was to become a military king,

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1. p. 27f.

crush out all opposition, and by pressure from without fuse all elements into one coherent kingdom. This Jewish conception, which presented itself to Jesus for acceptance and was constantly being urged upon Him by those nearest Him, has had its place in the history of the Church, e.g., the Crusades, the Inquisition, the Thirty Years' War, St. Bartholomew's Day, the use of the state to crush out dissent in England and in New England in the seventeenth century, etc. The same spirit shows itself frequently in our own time; for example, in the attempt to establish truth and overthrow error by the force of ecclesiastical organization. How successful has this spirit been historically in advancing the kingdom? What place has force in progress? Would the victories which have been won by force have been won without it, if those fighting the battle of the truth had been content to wait and let the spirit of truth conquer by its own inherent force?

Undoubtedly there come times when force seems to be absolutely necessary to secure an advance in Christian civilization, but probably such times are less frequent than the world has supposed. A keen student of public affairs who has been long a resident of the South and in the closest contact with its problems, a northerner by birth and education, has recently said that he has become more and more convinced that the issue between the North and the South could have been settled, and would have been settled, without bloodshed if it had not been that the people on both sides were lashed into enmity and bitterness by agitators. Before the war began, the

Quakers throughout the South had already given their slaves freedom, and their example, added to that of England and other European nations, was steadily leavening the entire nation.

One of our modern exhibitions of this age-old conception of force is the glorification of legislation as of superlative value. Unquestionably legislation is of the utmost value under the right conditions. What are those conditions? Is legislation which is on the statute books but not enforced a good or an evil? The ideal of some of our social workers to-day seems to be to secure the passage of legislation covering every evil in society, apparently with the supposition that when the law is passed the work is done. It is true that only by legislation can some of the worst evils of modern society be controlled, and at last eradicated. But such legislation is worse than useless unless it has behind it the spirit of justice and love in a sufficient number of lives to ensure its enforcement. A prohibitory law is a source of demoralization if it is only on the statute books. A law limiting the labor of women and children is worthless without adequate inspection, and adequate inspection depends for the most part upon the temper of the community.

In our time there is a glorification also of organization. It is true that our marvelous modern progress is largely the result of organization and that without it we should be utterly helpless in front of many of the problems of the time.<sup>1</sup> But the larger

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1. "If a ring is to be put into the snout of the greedy strong, only organized society can do it." Ross, *Sin and Society*, p. 93.

the organization, the more necessary the inner power to make it effective. One loom can easily be moved by the hand or the foot, but a thousand looms are a cumbrance to the ground unless there is power at the center of the factory adequate to put them into motion.

"Wheels there must be, and wheels within wheels, and the adjustment of this intricate mechanism is essential to effective philanthropy; but the wheels are moved by the power of love and the mechanism halts until the spirit of the living creatures is in the wheels."<sup>1</sup>

How much stress did Jesus put upon organization? How far did He organize His followers for their work? How far in His teaching do we find the suggestion of the development of a church?

2. Another ancient conception of the effective force in social progress, a conception which is being revived to-day in many quarters, is that the world is to advance chiefly by intellectual enlightenment. The Greeks held strongly to this conception. To the Greek "insight becomes the innermost soul of life; goodness appears to depend upon correct knowledge, evil, on the other hand, is an intellectual mistake, an error of judgment."<sup>2</sup> The same thought frequently comes to the surface in modern discussions.

Sin, we are told, is ignorance. Teach a man the right way and he will walk in it. Enlightenment will solve the social question.

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1. Peabody, *The Approach to the Social Question*, p. 93.

2. Eucken, *The Problem of Human Life*, p. 8.

Is this conception Jesus' conception? What is His attitude toward the intellectual life? How fundamental is the education of the intellect in progress?

In a time when the intellect has won such amazing victories both in the theoretical and in the practical field, it is easy to imagine it the most important force in human progress. But it requires only a little reflection to discover that the value of intellectual capacity and training lies in what is behind it.

It is true that knowledge and virtue can never be divorced; the clearest discernment is always essential to the highest type of character. There are sins of ignorance as fatally destructive as sins of choice. Nevertheless, while intellect and character should never be considered as in opposition to one another, the intellect is after all the instrument of the character. As someone has put it, the superb intellectual training of to-day is like the marvelous construction and equipment of the modern ocean liner, but whether or not all this marvel of ingenuity and skill is to be for the world's best use or not depends upon the man on the bridge. Character is at the helm in every life. Given truth and the spirit of love at the center, the perfection of the intellect means ever increasing blessing to the world. But under the control of selfishness, the intellect becomes increasingly a curse. Intellectual training not infrequently engenders "pride of intellect." Pride of wealth, pride of birth, are essentially vulgar; is pride of intellect, intellectual snobbery, any less vulgar? We are emphasizing to-day stewardship

of material wealth; is it not time also to emphasize stewardship of intellectual wealth? The greater the intellectual resources and training the greater the responsibility and the opportunity of service. For their sakes not only do I sanctify myself, and win wealth, but I *educate* myself!

It is the duty then of those who know to share their knowledge and their trained power with those who do not know. But this duty does not alter the fact that telling people what is right does not necessarily mean their doing what is right. The seat of action is deeper than knowledge and the intellect has only a part in the final result.

3. How then is the kingdom to advance? How did it begin? John 1:17. As has been pointed out<sup>1</sup> Christianity is not a system of abstract truth but the incarnation of truth. What then is the leaven mentioned in Matt. 13:33? What according to John 1:17 are the constituent elements of the Christ spirit? The kingdom having started in the world, how does it spread? There is contagion of goodness as well as of evil. Goodness has the power to leaven the lump. Given one life filled with the spirit of grace and truth, justice and the spirit of good will, how can such lives be multiplied? Their multiplication involves co-operation, grouping, organization, and greatly increased power of service. In organized effort two and two can easily equal five. But wherein lies the value of such united effort? Is there any real advance of the kingdom

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1. p. 15.

possible except through the increase in the number of lives genuinely filled with the spirit of justice and good will? "Ye are the light of the world." "Ye are the salt of the earth."

Jesus' thought, then, is that the only effective agency of social progress, the unit of social force, is personality charged with love. "The good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom" (Matt. 13:38).

We are so accustomed to see the work of social betterment directed by organizations and machinery of every sort, that one is tempted to forget this fundamental fact of Jesus' message. We need to see this energy at work in virgin soil to realize its power.

In 1875 Arnold Toynbee, a student of Balliol College, Oxford, took up his residence in the Whitechapel district in London, believing that the only way to help the poor is to have a vital and intelligent sympathy with them, and that such sympathy can be gained only by living in the midst of the conditions in which they live. Out of the influence of his brief life have grown the social settlements of the world. His influence sent a brilliant American student, Stanton Coit, to live in a tenement house in Rivington Street, New York. His work in that needy neighborhood expanded into the Neighborhood Guild of New York, which was the forerunner of the University Settlement of New York and of all the social settlements of the United States with their multiplied organizations and agencies to meet the physical, educational, social and moral needs of the neglected districts of the great cities.

The life of every pioneer missionary is an illustration of the same fact; at the beginning of every great missionary achievement, which issues in churches and colleges and hospitals and a renewed community and national life, lies the self-forgetful heroism and good will of a devoted personality.<sup>1</sup>

In this teaching of Jesus, that the unit of social force is personality charged with love, we have the fundamental fact of His social message. All His developed teaching is the application of this principle to particular circumstances. Every problem of human society yields to the spirit of brotherhood.

It may be a disappointment to some that we have not reached a spectacular solution of social difficulties, some brilliant panacea for all the ills of the world. We are most of us waiting like Naaman to be bidden to do some great thing. But what Jesus would have us do is a simple, everyday matter. If we fill the relationships of our lives, be they many or few, far-reaching or insignificant in their influence, with the spirit of justice and good will, then so far as in us lies we have made the kingdom of God come upon the earth.

“See what turn the mind of the apostle took when he was arming his disciples for the great conflict of the age. Children, obey your parents—Fathers, provoke not your children—Servants, be obedient to your masters—Masters, forbear threatenings. Finally to include all, put on the whole armor of God. As if the first thought, in arming the Church

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1. E.g., the lives of Carey, Moffat, Livingstone, Paton, etc.



for great trials and stout victories, was to fill common life and the relations of the house with a Christian spirit."<sup>1</sup>

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1. Bushnell, *Christian Nurture*, p. 63. An interesting illustration that this was the real power of the early church is given by Pliny in his description of the Christian communities in Asia Minor in 111 or 112 A. D. "They affirmed the whole of their guilt, or their error, was, that they met on a stated day before it was light, and addressed a form of prayer to Christ, as to a divinity, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purposes of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up, after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble, to eat in common a harmless meal."

Pliny's Letters, Bohn trans., p. 395.

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## LESSON VII

### SOCIAL GROUPS: THE FAMILY

Having discovered the fundamental principle in Jesus' message, that personality charged with the spirit of justice and good will is the unit of social force, we turn to see how in His teaching Jesus brings this principle to bear upon the varied relationships of life. First of all, how in Jesus' thought does this principle apply in the primary human relationship, the original social group, the family? The relations of husband and wife, father and mother and children, children and children, constitute a world by themselves, a microcosm. If the problem of the family can be perfectly solved, every social problem will be solved, for there every human institution has its roots.

1. Jesus was profoundly interested in the family. This interest is shown not only in the fullness and definiteness of His teaching upon marriage, where He departs from His usual practice of avoiding the discussion of particular problems, but also in the frequency with which He draws upon the language of family ties to express the higher relationships of the spiritual life. His supreme revelation of God is in terms of the family. God is Father (Matt. 6:9, 14; 23:9; John 20:17); mankind are His children (Matt. 5:45); those who do the will of God are to Jesus brother, sister, mother (Mark

3:35). Study also the following passages as illustrations of Jesus' frequent references to home relationships either directly or in figure. Matt. 5:22-24; 10:21, 34-37; 13:52; 18:15-17; 22:2, 3; 24:43; 25:1; Mark 7:9-13; 10:28-30; Luke 14:12-14, 26; 15:11-32; 16:27-31.

2. We find Jesus in close touch with home life. He is continually meeting men and women in their joys and sorrows, sharing in the festivities of the home, proving Himself the friend of little children, moving in and out of the home as a companion and counselor. See Lesson II. Study the following: Matt. 20:20; Mark 1:16-20, 29-31; 2:1 (see margin of A. R. V.); 5:22, 23, 35-43; 7:25-30; Luke 7:2, 11-17; 11:37; 12:13; 19:1-10; John 11:1-5; 19:25-27.

3. The appeal of Jesus is both to men and to women. As the circumstances of the time determined, He was thrown mostly with men and His chief utterances were to them. They formed the whole body of the Twelve. They made up, for the most part, the crowds which gathered about Him. His teaching was principally in terms of their lives. E.g., Matt. 5:45; 8:12; Mark 4:26, etc. His gospel and His life exalted the manly virtues of energy, endurance, courage, determination, devotion to duty.<sup>1</sup> But the Gospels show that Jesus did not hold Himself aloof from the life of women. His use of illustrations from their life shows he was acquainted with their daily activities (Luke 15:8-10; Matt. 24:41). And the story of

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1. Thomas Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ*.

His own life reveals the fact that He was constantly thrown into personal relations with them.

(1) His relations with His mother, Luke 2:48; Mark 3:20, 21, 31-35; John 2:1-11; 19:25-27.

(2) Sisters in the home, Mark 6:3.

(3) Women in the circle of His companions and friends, Luke 8:1-3; 10:38-42; 23:55; 24:10; John 11:1-44.

(4) Many women mentioned whom He met casually, Mark 1:30, 31; 7:25-30; 12:41-44; Luke 7:11-15, 36-50; 8:43-48; 11:27, 28; 13:10-16; 23:27-31; John 4:7-29; 8:3-11.

In John 4:27 is expressed the current notion of the attitude a Jewish rabbi should take toward a woman (cf. the authorized version and the revised version here). But Jesus met woman on the plane of equality (cf. Mark 10:11, 12).<sup>1</sup> He never talked down to them. Some of His loftiest teaching was called forth by their needs. He inspired His disciples with His own spirit, which Paul expressed in Gal. 3:28. And wherever, since His day, His teaching has been fully and frankly accepted, there woman has taken her true place by the side of man. Woman was right in being "last at the cross and first at the tomb," for to the Christ she largely owes her social and legal emancipation.

4. Jesus also had the closest sympathy with

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1. "With Jesus there is neither a recognition of a past subjection, an attempt at her emancipation, nor a lament on the difficulties to be foreseen in the enforcement of His teaching in regard to marriage. He simply treats woman as an equal—equal in the matters of marriage and divorce, equal as a companion." Shailer Mathews, *The Social Teaching of Jesus*, p. 97. Dr. Mathews points out that the Greek word to express Jesus' feeling toward women is *agapao* and not *phileo*. Ditto 99, note. See *supra*, p. 33.

child life. His was one of those unspoiled natures who have not forgotten their own childhood and who see in the child nature the expression of some of the supreme qualities of the human soul.

(1) What were some of the characteristics of His own boyhood as indicated by Luke 2:40-52? What may be considered as suggested by such phrases as "grew and waxed strong," "filled with wisdom," "the grace of God was upon him," "subject unto them," "advanced in wisdom and stature," "in favor with God and man"?

The boyhood of Jesus contained the ideal elements, (a) of an environment of retirement and quiet, yet with glimpses of the great world, a place where He could mature slowly without the hothouse forcing which is so destructive to many children's development to-day, (b) of a truly filial attitude of the boy toward his father and mother, (c) of a rounded symmetrical growth, body, mind and spirit, (d) of a wide range of relationships—family, neighbors and friends, God.

(2) What attitude did Jesus take toward the children with whom He came into contact? Mark 5:22-24, 35-43; 9:17-27; 10:13-16; Matt. 21:15, 16. What was His sense of the worth of the child? Matt. 10:42; 18:1-14; Luke 17:2.<sup>1</sup>

(3) What was His feeling about the child spirit? Mark 9:33-37; 10:13-16; Matt. 11:25.

What in the child nature makes it the natural possessor of the kingdom? What childlike quality

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1. If "little children" is figurative for "new disciples," the figure itself, nevertheless, expresses Jesus' feelings for childhood.



must the mature person acquire to enter the kingdom? Many traits of the child have been mentioned as the cause of Christ's commendation, e.g., innocence, faith, self-forgetfulness, eagerness to learn, obedience. What do you think Jesus meant?<sup>1</sup>

5. Very frequently Jesus alludes to the spirit which should animate home relationships.

(1) What is His attitude toward the fifth commandment? Mark 7:10-13.<sup>2</sup> How did His own life illustrate this? Luke 2:51; see also 3 (1).

(2) He alludes now and then to breaches between members of the household. What attitude of mind would He see cultivated: As a personal preparation of helpfulness? Matt. 7:3-5. After a breach has come? Matt. 18:15-35.

He has a clear discernment of what influence His message is to have upon the spirit of these relationships. Matt. 10:21, 34-36; Mark 13:12, 13; Luke 12:49-53. But He is perfectly uncompromising in His teaching of the relation of the kingdom to home ties. Matt. 10:37; Mark 3:31-35; 10:28-30; Luke 9:59-62; 14:26-35.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus demands of His followers absolute self-renunciation. He wants all or nothing. If any

1. An interesting commentary on Jesus' words is the following: "It is written in the Book that holds the wisdom of our race that one who is reborn into the kingdom of God enters as a little child. It is there in black and white, yet few people get the idea into their consciousness. They expect regeneration to produce an upright man. God knows better than that. . . . For a little child stumbles and falls and goes the wrong way many times before it learns the way of life." White, *A Certain Rich Man*, p. 405.

2. For a discussion of the subject of *Corban* see Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, II, 18f.

3. Luke 14:26 has always been considered "a hard saying." But it is a statement of relative values. Just as the candle flame in the presence of the arc light is as a dark opaque object and is cast as a shadow, so in comparison with the love of Christ ordinary human love is as hatred.

human love can compete with the soul's love for Him, then the latter is not thoroughgoing. Over and over again Jesus seems to repulse those who want to follow Him, bidding them wait until they are ready to give Him this undivided allegiance. Yet the higher allegiance gives to the human affections a new glory and a new satisfaction.

6. We are now ready to discuss a subject of the greatest importance in Jesus' time as it is in ours—marriage and divorce. We have now, as a background for the discussion, Jesus' valuation of the home and of the relationships which are included within it. So vital to the welfare of society did Jesus think the right and wrong of this subject to be that, as has been suggested,<sup>1</sup> He departed here from His usual practice and discussed the theme with a good deal of definiteness and fullness. The passages which contain Jesus' teaching are the following: Matt. 5: 27-32; 19: 3-12 (Mark 10: 2-12; Luke 16: 18); 22: 23-32 (Mark 12: 18-27; Luke 20: 27-40).

From a study of these passages try to answer the following questions.

- (1) Has Jesus any of the ascetic view of marriage?<sup>2</sup>
- (2) Is He insistent upon monogamy?
- (3) How long is marriage to continue?
- (4) What was Moses' attitude toward divorce?

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1. p. 65.

2. The ascetic view was influenced no doubt by Paul's teaching, 1 Cor. 7: 8f., though he urged his particular position in view of what he felt was the fact that Christ was soon to return (see especially ver. 29-34). Also the moral conditions of the times drove many to asceticism.

(5) Does Jesus permit divorce?

(6) Is there any difference between the suggestion of Matthew and that of Mark and Luke on this point?

(7) Should we interpret Jesus according to the freer or the stricter statement?

(8) Would Jesus admit the application of the Mosaic principle to-day?

(9) What is the essential fact in unfaithfulness to the marriage bond?

(10) Is Jesus legislating on this subject, or setting forth an ideal?

(11) How far should statutory enactment in this field be in advance of public sentiment?

Jesus' stern attitude was utterly distasteful to His own generation as it is to ours. Do you think it too ideal for modern conditions? What should be the attitude of the ministry of to-day toward the marriage of divorced persons? What should be the attitude of the Church toward the reception of such persons to membership and church activities? What should be our social attitude toward them?

There are great difficulties in the way of holding that Jesus is legislating here. If He is, it is the sole place where He does legislate, and moreover He places unfaithfulness to the marriage bond in the thought; hence the strict interpretation of Matthew as legislation would make lustful thought a ground for absolute divorce. Jesus seems rather, here as elsewhere, to be presenting an ideal. To Him marriage is indissoluble.<sup>1</sup> The spirit of Chris-

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1. With one possible exception.

tian love—of justice and good will—should fill the relation. When love is gone, what shall be done must be determined as Christ everywhere else suggests, by treating the individual case as an individual case. The ideal for the Church and for the Christian individual must be kept where Jesus put it, but law must represent not the ideal but the practical. We ought to work earnestly to keep the ideals of marriage high, to correct the flippancy with which men and women enter the relation—in other words, to attack the evil at its source. Meanwhile we should seek to limit as far as possible the legal causes for divorce, to secure full publicity for all divorce proceedings, and, in the individual case, before divorce is sought, to counsel patience and Christian forbearance, and especially thoughtfulness for the children, if there are any. The saddest result of divorce is the blighting of childhood.

Some of the modern causes of the prevalence of divorce should be carefully considered—"the ape and the tiger" still surviving in human nature, the strength of the individualistic philosophy, the education and development of woman, her ability to earn her own way, a false conception of marriage—that it is a contribution to the happiness of two individuals instead of being a training school of their character and that of their children.

Professor Peabody points out that the present-day conflict is between the individualistic and the social theories of marriage, between "the conception of it as a temporary contract, involving the interests of those who are known as 'the parties concerned';

and the conception of it as a social institution involving the fabric of the social order."<sup>1</sup> Jesus sides with those who hold the social conception. To Him the family is the unit of social life and development and on its integrity depends the present and the future welfare of society. In this respect, as in others, His attitude toward the family is strikingly modern.

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1. *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*, p. 131. The same position is emphasized in a wise little book, Adler, *Marriage and Divorce*, which every student of the problem should ponder: "I venture to say that in nine cases out of ten, even fine and lovely people will enter into marriage with never a thought beyond that of their own happiness. They forget that they are servants, that there are great social ends to which they must bow; and the fact that these ends are lost sight of is the chief explanation of the increase of the evil of divorce" (pp. 13, 14).

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## LESSON VIII

### SOCIAL GROUPS: THE RICH

The acquisition and right use of wealth is one of the subjects most frequently discussed by Jesus. Perhaps the reason why it appears so often is indirectly given in Luke 16:14. Moreover, in the life of any civilized community a large part of the time and the effort of the individuals who make it up has to be occupied with economic affairs. "What shall we eat, what shall we drink, wherewithal shall we be clothed?" were engrossing questions to the Jew of Jesus' time as they are to-day.

1. Apparently the Gospel writers were not equally interested in this aspect of Jesus' message. John makes no reference to it whatever. Of the characteristic words used elsewhere in the discussion the Fourth Gospel employs only one and that only incidentally—John 12:5, 8; 13:29. The Gospel of Mark has not much more material. Five passages, 4:18, 19; 6:8-10; 10:17-30; 12:1-11, 41-44, cover all which bears even remotely upon the theme. Both of these Gospels have other objects in view. The great sources of the teaching are Matthew and Luke. The material in Matthew is as follows: 5:42; 6:19-34; 8:20; 10:9-11; 13:22, 44-46; 18:21-35; 19:16-30; 20:1-16; 21:12, 13, 33-41; 25:14-46. Luke's is found in the following sections: 2:24; 6:20, 21, 24, 25, 30, 34, 35, 38; 7:41-43; 8:14; 9:3, 4, 58; 10:4-7; 12:13-34; 14:15-24, 28-30; 15:8-10; 16:1-14, 19-31; 18:18-30; 19:11-27; 20:

9-16; 21: 1-4. A surface comparison of the amount of this material will show that there is nearly twice as much of it in Luke as in Matthew. But there is a much deeper difference than appears upon the surface. Luke is a gospel of the poor. The sympathies of the writer are evidently with the unprivileged classes. Whenever he and Matthew repeat the same sayings they are almost always to be found in his Gospel in a balder, sterner form;<sup>1</sup> and his material includes a number of vigorous passages not recorded elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

2. Before we can grasp Jesus' teaching on this subject we must look at His practice. He Himself belonged to the poorer classes, Luke 2: 22-24 (cf. Lev. 12: 8; 5: 11). He had no home after His ministry was fully under way (Matt. 8: 20). He was Himself the recipient of charity (Luke 8: 1-3). But as far as His own associations were concerned, He seemed to have no thought of rich or poor. See Lesson II., 2 (6), p. 16. Other passages mention well-to-do friends. Matt. 8: 14; 9: 10; Mark 1: 20; 16: 1; Luke 8: 2, 3; 10: 38-42; 18: 23; John 18: 15, 16; John 19: 38, 39.<sup>3</sup> Jesus estimated

1. Matt. 5: 3, 6 and Luke 6: 20, 24; Matt. 5: 42 and Luke 6: 30; Matt. 19: 21 and Luke 18: 22.

2. Luke 12: 16-21; 16: 1-13, 19-31. The discussion of this point in Peabody's *Jesus Christ and the Social Question* is especially valuable. He sums it up with the words: "In short, between Matthew and Luke there is as marked a difference of teaching as may be found in modern literature between the teaching of an earnest philanthropist and the teaching of a socialist agitator" (p. 194). He attributes the difference to the fact that "Luke like Paul, with whom he lived and taught, had a larger social experience and a keener human sympathy than the other evangelists." Other writers attribute this spirit in Luke to the influence of the ascetic Jewish sect, the Ebionites.

3. See Heuver, *The Teaching of Jesus Concerning Wealth*, pp. 110-112.

men not by the standards of riches or poverty, but in the spirit of brotherhood, and from the standpoint of their common origin in God.

3. Turning now to the teaching of Jesus itself we are struck:

(1) With an apparently ascetic quality. This, as has been stated, is accentuated in Luke, but it exists also in Matthew and Mark.

(a) What is Jesus' apparent attitude toward the rich in such passages as Matt. 6:19-24; 13:22; 19:24; Mark 10:23; Luke 6:20, 24; 12:15-21; 16:19-31; 18:22?

(b) What is His apparent requirement of the rich man who seeks admission to the kingdom? Matt. 19:21; Luke 12:33, 34 (cf. Luke 19:8).

(c) What is His attitude toward the reception of charity by His disciples? Matt. 10:9-11; Luke 10:5-7. His own example? Luke 8:1-3.

That the ascetic note is real and not merely apparent has been urged by some writers who have appealed for the corroboration of their judgment to that early bit of Christian literature, the Epistle of James (see especially 1:9-11; 2:1-9; 5:1-6), and also to the communistic spirit in the early Jerusalem church (Acts 4:34, 35). But Paul's teaching is proof of another spirit in the church at large (1 Cor. 13:3; 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:14; 9:7; 12:14; 1 Thess. 4:11), and the story of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11) contradicts the idea that such communism was anything but a voluntary expression of the spirit of fellowship. Moreover, the Jerusalem practice did not extend to other churches.

(2) What Jesus was attacking was not wealth itself, but the supremacy of wealth, the control of life by "things" (Matt. 6: 24; Luke 12: 15).<sup>1</sup> When riches take the first place in life they are evil; when they keep the place of due subordination, they serve a useful purpose. But they are constantly seeking to usurp the place which is not truly theirs. So Jesus is constantly calling attention to the dangers of wealth. From a study of the following what should you say are some of the dangers He thought most subtle? Luke 12: 13-21; 18: 18-30; 16: 19-31; Matt. 6: 25-34. What does Jesus mean by the phrase, "the deceitfulness of riches"? Matt. 13: 22 (Mark 4: 19). Luke in the same parable uses the phrase, "choked with riches" (Luke 8: 14). All these dangers can be summed up in the peril to the spirit of love. Men who are seeking riches as their goal tend inevitably to become self-centered, hard-hearted, to lose "the quality of mercy," and even the sense of any personal need. A smug self-content is the common characteristic of those who are rich toward self and not toward God. "Saint Francis Xavier, the noble Jesuit missionary, said that in the confessional men had confessed to him all sins that he knew and some that he had never imagined, but none had ever of his own accord confessed that he was covetous."<sup>2</sup> All this destroys the sense of unity with one's fellows and of dependence upon them and upon God, creates class dis-

1. Mark 10: 24 with its significant change from ver. 23 supports this view if the text can be sustained, but many ancient authorities omit the important words of the verse. (See revised version, margin.)

2. Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 74.

tinctions, and so breaks down the sense of social solidarity which the kingdom of God is seeking to develop and make effective in society.<sup>1</sup>

(3) But Jesus' teaching in respect to wealth is not merely negative. He lays emphasis upon the right uses of wealth. The principal passages are Matt. 25:14-30, 31-46; Luke 12:13-21; 16:1-13, 19-31; 19:11-27.

The parables of the Minae and of the Talents are so nearly alike that they suggest two reports of the same story. Yet apparently Jesus did not hesitate to repeat material when He felt it could be of use. Our use of the word talent is of course figurative. The talent to which Jesus referred was a sum of money equal to about \$1200. The mina was between \$15 and \$20. What is the teaching of each parable? They have their relation to what? Luke 19:11. So the gifts of God specified here are for service in the kingdom. Who is it in each parable that bears the brunt of Jesus' criticism? Our criticism of unfaithfulness to stewardship is usually directed against the men and women of to-day who have great possessions; does Jesus look at the matter from this angle?

Two other parables show the sin and folly of a neglect of the duty of stewardship: the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21) and Dives and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). The first was under the control of "things," seeking "treasure for himself." What is it to be "rich toward God"? What is the only

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1. Jesus does not point out any of the perils of poverty to the religious spirit. What are some of these?

treasure which can be carried out of this world? Cf. 1 Cor. 13:13.

The second parable is the most awful which Jesus spoke. It is clothed in the imagery of the rabbinical thought of the time. Dives had evidently been an almsgiver, else Lazarus would not have lain day by day at his gate. But he did not "give himself" with his alms; they were merely incidental. His life and that of his brothers centered in the enjoyment of their possessions and this selfish absorption produced a hardening of the heart which made the punishment of the other world inevitable, a spiritual condition which could not be changed even by the warning of one sent from the world of the dead.

Two other parables point out the right use of wealth. First, that which has caused so much labor to the commentators, the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-13).<sup>1</sup> But the point is not difficult to see. Here was a shrewd man who saw his chance to use his employer's money to make friends for himself. If such a man were wise enough to see and use his opportunity, how much more<sup>2</sup> should the children of the kingdom use the possessions which they have acquired—the mammon of unrighteousness when wrongly used—to win for themselves the true riches of friendship and brotherhood in the kingdom. In what practical ways can the spirit of the parable be carried out?

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1. "In the case of the parable of the Unjust Steward there are something like thirty-six interpretations on record." Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 78.

2. A favorite form of argument with Jesus—the *a fortiori*—is implied here.

In the other parable, that of the Sheep and the Goats (Matt. 25: 31-46), in what terms does Jesus express His conception of stewardship? The judgment is determined by what?

Summing up then Jesus' teaching on the subject of the acquisition and the right use of wealth, Jesus here, as elsewhere, was no ascetic. He was a poor man, full of profound sympathy with the poor. Yet in the body of the disciples it was John, apparently one of those in the most comfortable circumstances (Mark 1: 19, 20; John 18: 15, 16), who was His closest friend. In His associations He seemed to make no distinction whatever between poor and rich. He penetrated beneath such artificial distinctions as those of wealth and poverty to essential manhood. He saw the seductive dangers of wealth and the difficulty in the rich man's taking the attitude of absolute self-renunciation which He demanded of all His followers. But He saw also in wealth the possibility of service and He called to men to leave the service of mammon and to use their possessions to build up the spirit of brotherhood, which is the essence of the kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

1. Some of the topics which are worthy of sober discussion are: What do you think is Jesus' attitude toward the accumulation of property?

What constitutes luxury?

How far can money be rightfully used for personal development for dress, etc.?

What are some of the underlying causes of the mad race for wealth in our generation? How far is man, and how far is woman, responsible for it?

Can any rule be laid down as to what part of one's income should be given away?

An interesting discussion of the question, "Was Jesus a Socialist?" is to be found in Shailer Mathews, *Social Teaching of Jesus*, pp. 148-155. The same question is discussed from the opposite point of view in Campbell, *Christianity and the Social Order*, Ch. VI.

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## LESSON IX

### SOCIAL GROUPS: THE POOR

The existence of the rich, such has been the construction of society thus far, presupposes the existence of the poor. Rich and poor are complementary terms. Up to our time poverty has not been looked upon as a problem to be solved; it has been considered as a state to be deplored and endured. But to-day we are beginning to see that poverty like all other ills from which man suffers has its deep underlying causes. It used to be charged up entirely to individual thriftlessness or individual wrongdoing, but now we are realizing that society is largely to blame and that if social conditions can be altered there is hope of eliminating poverty altogether.

The problem of poverty was much more hopeless in Jesus' time than it is in ours. It stared Him in the face at every turn, as it everywhere confronts the visitor of to-day in Palestine. So it is not strange that He is frequently, directly or implicitly, dealing with it. Once He gave utterance to an expression about the poor which might be construed as a bit of hopeless fatalism, Matt. 26:11 (Mark 14:7; John 12:8). Is this Jesus' meaning? What is the point of His reference? In several other passages He seems to imply that there is a merit in being poor (Luke 6:20, 21; 9:3, 4; 10:4-7). Do you think this is Jesus' meaning? Did He look

upon His disciples as objects of charity? Luke 10: 7.

As has been already more than once pointed out in these studies, Jesus was a poor man. He came out of a poor home and His associates were mostly, but by no means all, of the poorer class. And His work was principally done among the poor. Although Pharisees and scribes, rulers of the synagogue, centurions, and now and then a royal personage, appear in the Gospel scenes, the multitudes that thronged Him for healing and for instruction were principally made up of the poor. Why was He attracted to them? Was His the motive of the revolutionary leader? What light do Matt. 14: 14; 15: 32, throw on His motive? He felt the needs of this large class and it was His nature to go where the need lay (Mark 2: 17). Knowing from personal contact the suffering of the poor, He wanted to help them.

How was this help to be administered?

1. The poverty of the time was everywhere palliated by almsgiving. Does He sanction this? Matt. 5: 42; 6: 2-4; Luke 6: 30; 12: 33. What was the practice of the company to which He belonged, although they themselves were supported by gifts? John 12: 4-6; 13: 29. What was the effect of His influence upon one of His rich followers? Luke 19: 8. What was the command laid upon another rich man who wished spiritual help? Matt. 19: 21. What does He set forth as the decisive test of character? Matt. 25: 34-45. But while Jesus accepted the principle of almsgiving as natural, He felt the

dangers of its abuse (Matt. 6:2-4). Moreover, can you think of any time when He Himself gave alms? What did He do for the poor people who came to Him asking help? Cf. Mark 8:22-26; 10:46-52. (Cf. Acts 3:2-8.) How important was almsgiving in the most characteristic story of His teaching about charity? Luke 10:30-37.

Thus while Jesus advocated giving as a primary duty (Acts 20:35), He Himself is busy doing something for the poor which is far better. Just as He does not deal with symptoms in other difficult cases in human pathology, but goes down to the causes of the trouble, so here what He has to give is given to reach the cause. The poverty and beggary of Bartimæus had been due to blindness, so He removes that instead of giving money or food, and thus makes it possible for the man to become again a self-respecting and self-supporting member of society.

The spirit of Christian love which was the fruit of Jesus' presence in the world issued in the virtue of *Caritas* which became specialized as Charity. As time went on, this became one of the most significant virtues of the Christian Church. But it was more and more looked upon, especially during the Middle Ages, as a merit merely to give, without thought of what effect the gift might have upon the recipient.<sup>1</sup> It was the effect upon the giver that was chiefly thought of, upon his present state of mind, his future in the heavenly life. Then came the great reaction against such charity, a reaction which is embodied in modern organized charity.

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1. Uhlhorn, *Christian Charity in the Ancient Church*.

How far do Jesus' teaching and practice harmonize with this movement? When Jesus says, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Matt. 5:42), how far does He mean to present the method of giving? Are we to give or lend without any thought as to the result in the character of the gift or the loan? Often our so-called benevolence is prompted merely by a desire to dismiss a case or save our personal feelings. How would Jesus Christ regard this?

2. When John sent to Jesus his messenger to ask "Art thou he that cometh or look we for another?" (Luke 7:20), part of the reply was a reference to Isaiah 61:1 (see margin).<sup>1</sup> What did He mean? What were the good tidings to the poor? Did Jesus mean that there was to be an abundance of alms for them in the new kingdom? Did He refer to their physical necessities? Is His word limited to either the physical or the spiritual realm? What do you consider that the fulfillment of His "good tidings to the poor" will include? What will the complete coming of the kingdom mean for the poor and for all the unprivileged classes?

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1. "That the 'poor' in question are the literally poor, and the 'lame and blind and the lepers' are those physically afflicted is obvious." Cone, *Rich and Poor*, p. 71.

See also Jesus' use of this passage from Isaiah at Nazareth, Luke 4:16-21.

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## LESSON X

### SOCIAL CLASSES

There were in the time of Jesus, as there are to-day, lines of social cleavage. There were higher classes and lower classes, and it was difficult, then as now, to pass from one group to the other. Wealth, birth, education, character, nationality, all had their influence in determining the social status of the individual. Throughout these studies we have had glimpses of the different social strata in Palestine within the Jewish nation and outside it. The scribes and Pharisees form one group with which the "publicans and sinners" are often contrasted (Mark 2:15, 16; Luke 15:1). We now and then catch sight of a member or two of the Roman governing class (Matt. 27:11-26). The Jewish rulers and the Pharisees as a whole are revealed as having a frank contempt for the people at large, the "multitude" who do not have the conventional standard of legal observances (John 7:49).

What was Jesus' attitude toward these social distinctions? Does He observe them? Can we classify Him in any social group?

1. As has been pointed out (p. 18) in His own practice He never recognized social classes. He moved in and out among all classes and conditions of men without definitely affiliating with any. He had the "heart of love" which makes it possible for

the one who possesses it to adapt himself to any social group.

2. In His teaching there is no room for a fundamental division into social classes. All stand on a common ground because all are children of one Father and the pupils of one Teacher (Matt. 23: 8-12). This is the ideal of pure democracy<sup>1</sup> and it is no wonder that the great political democracies of the world have been made such from the influence of this teaching.

3. Does this mean that Jesus teaches the absolute equality of all men? Cf. Matt. 25: 29. Does Jesus indicate that men are equally equipped for the work of life, that they will meet its opportunities in such a way as to get from them equal rewards? Matt. 13: 3-8; 25: 14-30; Luke 19: 12-26. What is the difference between democracy and equality?

The teaching of Jesus has always been a strong influence in the development of individuality. It has never set an outward standard to which all men must conform. It has sought to transform the inner life, to set free the essential power of each individual. In Puritanism this individualistic trend of Christianity was carried to an extreme,<sup>2</sup> and now the reaction has come, but there is no danger that in the future development of the kingdom the individual will be lost in society.

4. The spirit of brotherhood should prevent any

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1. Theodore Parker said that, "Democracy meant not 'I'm as good as you are,' but 'You're as good as I am.'" Lowell, *Democracy*, *Works* VI., p. 20.

2. p. 8.

groups which will naturally form, by the law of like attracting like, from becoming mutually exclusive (Luke 14:13-14). We cannot conceive of Jesus' frowning upon the close associations of kinship and friendship, but what He seeks is that the spirit of brotherhood shall rule, that the home and social life shall not become a center of selfish exclusiveness, but shall be increasingly one of the great instruments in the progress of the kingdom.

5. There is only one class which Jesus recognizes as having distinction in the kingdom. Mark 9:35; 10:35-45; Luke 22:25-27; Matt. 23:11 (cf. John 13:1-20). He Himself is Master and Lord because He perfectly embodies the spirit He is seeking to reproduce in His disciples.

While Jesus moved freely in and out among the different groups which made up the social life of His time and nation without distinctly affiliating Himself with any, yet He had a profound interest especially in one. They found a large proportion of the men and women of His time, the submerged class, the outcasts from the religious and social life of the nation. These "outcasts"—to use a word which in its broad meaning will include them all—were of several sorts.

1. There were the outcasts who had become such by disease. Luke 8:26-39; Mark 1:40-42; Luke 17:11-19; cf. Lev. 13:46.

2. There was the outcast, shut out, for one reason or another, from religious associations and privileges. John 9:34.

3. There was the outcast, made such by the

circumstances of national development. John 4: 9; Luke 9: 51-55; 10: 33; 17: 15-18; cf. also Mark 7: 25-30. In these particular cases, how had this feeling originated?

4. There was the outcast made such by his relation to a hated ruling race. Matt. 9: 9-11; Luke 19: 1-10. This group was always associated with the lowest elements of society. Matt. 9: 10; 21: 32; Luke 15: 1.

5. Finally there was the group of those whom the Gospels call "sinners." Matt. 9: 10; 21: 32; Luke 15: 1; John 8: 3-11.

What Jesus' teaching was concerning these "outcasts" from Jewish society we must get at for the most part inductively. Here, even more than ordinarily, His teaching is wrapped up in His action. We discover the principles of his gospel toward these ostracized men and women by a study of the way He treated them. What, then, was His attitude toward the outcast of His time, an attitude which by implication He urges upon us?

1. He did not shun contact and association with these people. He felt that they were in real and conscious need of Him. Those sick in body and sick in soul, those outside the pale of social respect, knew they needed His aid (Matt. 9: 10-13; Luke 18: 9-14), and this drew Him to them. Moreover, He realized that there was far more hope of reaching them than of affecting the self-satisfied Pharisee (Matt. 21: 31; John 4: 35, 39; Luke 8: 38, 39). So He mingled with them, to the disgust of the Jewish ecclesiastical leaders. Again and again He

broke convention and tradition, even the form of the law itself, in the interest of humanity. He touched the leper (Mark 1:41); He made friends with the man whom the rulers of the synagogue had excommunicated (John 9:35); He was in frequent association with the Samaritans, with whom the Jews ordinarily have no dealings (John 4:4f<sup>1</sup>); He ate with publicans and sinners (Mark 2:15). He knew that if the leaven is to leaven the lump, it must be in the dough, not outside the dish.

2. He took this attitude toward these classes not only because He realized their need, but because He recognized that they are all children of a common Father, that the Father's heart is as warm toward these despised ones as toward any others of His children. This is the whole point of Luke 15. Verse 1 gives the reason why Jesus related the parables continued in this chapter.

3. Again He took this attitude because He believed in the moral value and capacity for spiritual development in every man, no matter where he is in the social or the moral scale. He had a profound belief in human nature. This is the underlying thought of the parable of the Seed Growing Secretly (Mark 4:26-29).<sup>2</sup> The parable of the Lost Sheep shows Jesus' estimate of the value of a single soul (Luke 15:1-7). In the hands of the individual is his destiny, he is "master of his fate." John 5:40; Matt. 23:37.

There is a peculiar tenderness in Jesus' attitude

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1. More than once He sets up the Samaritan as an example to the Jews. Luke 10:33; 17:17, 18.

2. See the interesting marginal note to Luke 6:35.

toward this class about which we have been studying, especially toward those who have gone astray through sins of the senses. There are no more beautiful pictures in the New Testament than those in Luke 7:36-50; 15:11-32; John 8:3-11. It has again and again been pointed out that Jesus seems to share none of the implacable bitterness of so large a part of modern society toward such offenders. To Him there are far more hopeless states of sin (Mark 3:28-30; Matt. 23:13-33). He bids men beware of covetousness, and of selfishness in its varied forms, but He does not hold up sins of the flesh for special attack. This is not because He undervalues the family, as has been already pointed out in Lesson VII., not because He does not realize the gravity of such sins (cf. Matt. 5:27-30), but because relatively such sins do not put men in bondage as do the sins of the intellect and of the heart. The woman in Simon's house is still capable of love; her heart has not been withered by hypocrisy and pride. The Pharisee thanks God he is not like other men; the publican knows he is a sinner. There is always hope for the man who realizes how far down he is, how much climbing there is to do beyond the place where he is standing, to which perhaps he has sunk.

## NOTES

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## LESSON XI

### SOCIAL GROUPS: THE STATE

Jesus was not a teacher of politics any more than He was a teacher of economics, but He was deeply interested in life, which includes both as important elements. This interest is reflected here as elsewhere in His speech, one of the best of tests. His language is full of political suggestion. Indeed His message—His good tidings—is in terms of the state. Study the following: Matt. 12:25; 18:23; 22:2; Mark 15:2; Luke 14:31, 32; John 18:33-37.

1. He had a deep interest in His own country. He was constantly alluding to its physical characteristics—flowers, animals, birds, mountains, etc. Matt. 6:26-30; 13:3-8; Mark 6:31, 46; Luke 9:58; John 6:10. Its history and its literature were at His tongue's end. Matt. 4:4, 6, 10; 5:17, 21, 27, 33, 38, 43; 9:13; 11:14; Luke 4:16-27; 6:3, 4; 11:30-32. He declared that His mission was first to His own people. Matt. 15:21-28. And nothing could be tenderer than His lament over the city which will not heed His entreaties and warnings. Matt. 23:27.

As has been pointed out,<sup>1</sup> His great temptation, often recurring, had been to fall in with the current Jewish expectation and become a revolutionary leader, wresting the government from the Romans and administering it Himself. Matt. 4:1-11; 16:21-25; John 6:15 (Mark 6:46); cf. also Mark

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1. p. 31.

14: 36. But He conquered this temptation and took the attitude of respect for, and obedience to, the constituted authority. Mark 12: 13-17; Matt. 17: 24-27.<sup>1</sup> He came into conflict with the regulations of both the Jewish and the Roman state but He showed no disposition to dispute their authority (John 18 and 19: 1-26).

In Jesus' teaching the old ideal of government appears in contrast to His own. The luxury of the court life (Luke 7: 25), the self-interest of rulers, their authority founded on power, etc. (Mark 10: 42), these are touched upon with a suggestion of irony in His crisp words. Over against them is His own thought, a theocracy in which all the members are on the same level—like children in a home with a loving Father to care for them, like scholars in a school with one Teacher over them (Matt. 23: 8-10), a pure democracy as far as the members of the kingdom are concerned, under "the fatherly monarchy of God." The only basis of rank in the kingdom is service. The great one in the new rule will be great because he does most for the life of others (Matt. 20: 26-28; 23: 11; Mark 9: 35; 10: 43, 44; Luke 22: 26; John 13: 1-17). Not self-interest nor self-satisfaction, nor the possession of power is to be the ruling motive of the court of the new kingdom, but those in whom the

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1. The question about the tribute to Cæsar was of such a nature as to call forth from Jesus an equivocal reply, and the incident about the temple tax is not a governmental matter, but each reveals His general attitude and spirit toward authority. See Shailer Mathews, *The Social Teaching of Jesus*, pp. 116-119. Cf. the attitude of the apostolic leaders toward the government under which they lived. Acts 16: 37; 22: 25; 25: 10, 11; 1 Tim. 2: 2; 1 Peter 2: 13-17.

spirit of brotherhood is most completely incarnate are to be the nobility in it who shall vie with each other in deeds of helpfulness.

Who shall say, when he looks out upon the world of to-day, with its aristocracy of the men and the women who are putting their all of strength and wealth and intellect and character at the service of the world in utter self-forgetfulness, that the kingdom of God is not coming?

2. But much as Jesus loved His own country and longed to rescue it from the hypocrisy and the selfishness of its rulers, yet His was a broader ideal than that of national patriotism—great as is that virtue. The national Messianic ideal pictured a kingdom which should bring relief and blessing to the Jew.<sup>1</sup> What the attitude of the Jew had become toward outside nations is suggested by Matt. 5:43. The Pharisee had built about himself a wall of ceremonial to protect him from the defilement which even contact with the outside world would bring. Such caste feeling could easily lead to race hatred, and to the Jew, as to other nations of antiquity, a foreigner was an enemy. But Jesus caught up and still further amplified the noble words of the great prophets (Isa. 49:6) and proclaimed that His kingdom was to embrace the whole earth. His followers were to go out and make disciples of all the nations (Matt. 28:19).

Only after the message has been thus proclaimed to all men can the kingdom come in its completeness (Mark 13:10).

<sup>1</sup>. p. 29.

Such is Jesus' ideal of the Christian state—each nation filled with the spirit of brotherhood, its rulers those who best embody the self-forgetfulness and the desire to be of use which Jesus Himself so perfectly exemplified; all the nations, because each is filled with the Christ spirit, becoming servants one of another, making up one great "Federation of the World" of which the controlling spirit is love to God and love to man. That this happy result of the leaven of Christ's message is to be achieved no one who has come under His spell can doubt. Even the prophets looked forward eagerly to the time when swords would be beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks, and when war should be no more (Isa. 2:4; Micah 4:3; Joel 3:10). How much more shall we who believe that nothing can eventually stand against the spirit of Jesus see in vision, not so remote as once men thought it to be, the day when the world shall be one in desire to serve one another in the spirit of Him who "made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). Meanwhile shall not we who honor the name of the Prince of Peace use whatever influence may in us lie to bring to an end the "insane cultivation of the art of war" which "is the reproach and breakdown of statesmanship"<sup>1</sup> of to-day? The victories of the world are won first in the ideal realm, and if war ceases it will be because the majority of the influence of the world has been won to the side of peace. Let labor and education

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1. Stalker, *The Ethics of Jesus*, p. 365.

and religion stand together and the day of the dreadnaught will be over, and the millions upon millions which to-day are lavished upon armaments will become available for the betterment of national and international life, and the kingdom of Christ will come by leaps and bounds instead of in the slow progress of a laborious evolution.<sup>1</sup>

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1. At the opposite extreme from the philosophy of the dreadnaught is the non-resistance attitude of Tolstoi, which is founded on a narrow exegesis of Matt. 5:38-42.

The student will find Professor James' article on The Moral Equivalent of War, *McClure's Magazine*, August, 1910, full of suggestions.

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## LESSON XII

### CONCLUSION

Such in its main outline is the social message of Jesus. Nothing could be more simple but nothing could be more far-reaching. Everyone is a child of God, the Heavenly Father. God is love, and the spirit of love should control all the life of each of His children. Each should, as far as in him lies, fill the relationships of life with the spirit of brotherhood and then the kingdom of God will come—*has* come. Jesus' message to the social life of His time and ours is not an academic formulation of a theory of social conduct, but is simply the application of the principle and motive of brotherhood to the particular cases which came to His attention. And the problems of the social world can be solved in no other way than by the embodiment of this spirit in individual human lives. Organization and legislation can focus influence that otherwise would be scattering and ineffective, but organization and legislation, to achieve results, must have behind them the energy of earnest and loving spirits who believe heart and soul in the ideal of the kingdom and are seeking to make it the rule of the world.

If we accept this interpretation of Jesus' message, the question which confronts us is: What is our personal duty and responsibility? Phillips Brooks once said: "I know no truth which is not the parent of duty." Some truth may perhaps be held simply in the intellectual sphere, without affecting life. But spiritual truth is not of this

sort. To know spiritual truth is to become a new man.<sup>1</sup> If such knowledge does not make us better, it makes us worse. The apprehension of spiritual truth is a personal judgment.

Therefore what are we to do with this social message of Jesus? Only one thing—we too must seek to fill our lives, as He filled His, with the spirit of brotherhood. Our only responsibility is to fill with justice and good will every relationship of life in which God has placed us, to treat as our neighbor everyone who is within the reach of our help.

As the gospel of the kingdom was to be preached first at Jerusalem, so those relationships which are nearest the center of the life of each individual are first to be transformed by this new spirit. Oftentimes it is in the home that men and women find it most difficult to manifest the spirit of brotherliness; there an opportunity is too often found for a relief of the tension under which the restraints of good society put the individual, and a wife, or a child, or a brother, or a sister, is the object of an irritation which its subject would be ashamed to manifest toward anyone outside the home. The spirit of the kingdom must change all this.

And there are others with whom we are brought into relationship in the home. Many pass in and out of the home in service of one sort or another. In many homes there are helpers more or less permanent. How shall the spirit of brotherhood be

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1. "If there is a God, I must love Him. I must pour out my soul upon Him. I must worship at His feet. I must be at one with Him." Munger, *On the Threshold*, p. 218.

manifested toward these? How many persons there are who are interested in the broad industrial question, who perhaps are putting time and money into the betterment of condition of the shirtwaist maker, or of the child laborer, but who overlook the industrial problem as illustrated in their own homes and perhaps are making slaves of their own workers. Some, perhaps, are interested in the problem of the overcrowding of the tenement, but are not asking whether some of the tenement house conditions are not reproduced in their own homes. Have their helpers the air space necessary for work and sleep? Are they driven out into the street to meet their friends because no adequate place is provided within the walls of the home?<sup>1</sup>

We are coming to realize that the only way in which the broad industrial question can be answered is by the practical exhibition of the spirit of brotherhood. Its manifestation cannot be one-sided. Employer must manifest it toward employee and employee toward employer, the stronger of course having the greater responsibility for sharing the burden of the weak. Many women as well as men are large employers of labor through their possession of invested wealth. How far is that wealth filled with the spirit of brotherhood? For after all the greatest opportunity for benevolence is through the regular channels of the use of money, not through the avocation of giving.

By the natural affinities of circumstance and

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1. For an interesting description of a movement with the true ideal of helpfulness to the home workers, the Good Fellowship Club at Vassar, see *The Survey*, July 2, 1910, p. 523.

character we are all of us members of social groups. What is the attitude of those groups toward one another? Is the spirit of Christian brotherhood filling the social circles in which we move? Is Luke 14:12-14 the practice of our friends or of ourselves? Is the educated man or woman filling his or her education with the spirit of brotherhood? Does it make him or her a better member of the home and of society, or is it a barrier of separation between himself and his father and mother and his old friends? Is his education an instrument of social service or does it minister to personal selfishness?

We are in the larger relationships of the nation. Are we, as far as in us lies, infusing the spirit of brotherhood into the political life of which we are a part? Are we standing outside political life, looking on in a critical mood, or trying from within to leaven it? Are we helping to realize there the ideals of Jesus? For our rulers are we content with anything short of Jesus' ideal of greatness by service? What is our attitude toward the men and women who have come from other lands to share in our national life? On the Fourth of July, 1910, in the city of Rochester, New York, a civic banquet was held at which the city clubs welcomed to the life of the city the two hundred men, Italians, Russians, Germans and Englishmen, who had been naturalized within the city during the year just closed. After a time of conversation and good fellowship there were speeches, then all rose and clasping hands said together the old freeman's oath: "I do

solemnly bind myself that I will give my vote and suffrage as I shall judge in my own conscience may best conduce to the public weal." Then with hands still clasped, the friends new and old sang: "My country, 'tis of thee!"<sup>1</sup> Shall we help make such a manifestation of brotherhood as this prevail in the whole land? Shall the Chinese and the Japanese feel the warmth of a similar welcome? What shall be our attitude toward those "aliens in their native land"—the Indian and the negro? Are all these our brothers?

Does our Christianity reach beyond the borders of our own land? Is it "too light a thing"<sup>2</sup> for us also that our Christ should raise up the United States or Europe? Do we desire that He be a light to every nation, the salvation of Jehovah to the end of the earth? Do we desire that all nations should share the blessings a Christian civilization has brought us? Or is it too great a task for us to attempt to leaven every human relationship, wherever humanity is found, the world over, with the spirit of Christian brotherhood?

Such are a few hints of the way in which we can follow in the footsteps of the great Teacher in helping Him build up His kingdom in the twentieth century. But as students of the social problem we may be seeking something more than this general service, we may be asking for some definite work to do for the betterment of the world. Social service is the watchword of the time. How can we help

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1. *The Survey*, July 16, 1910, p. 604.

2. Isa. 49: 6.

directly the unprivileged and those who suffer to share in the blessings of the kingdom?

The present is a time of unfolding opportunity. One has simply to read such a paper as *The Survey* week by week to see how the avenues of social service are steadily multiplying. The older opportunities of the Social Settlement, the Child Labor Committee, the Playground Association, the Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, do not close, but other doors open: training classes in Philanthropy, Societies of Social and Moral Hygiene, Associations for the Prevention of Blindness, Know-Your-City institutes, etc. All these and scores of other organizations are testimony to the quickening sense of social responsibility. But in seeking for new opportunities, let us not overlook those that are oldest and nearest. For most of us the great social opportunity of present-day service is the Christian Church. It possesses organization, ideals, wealth, the spirit of benevolence. It forms a center of social unity and can be utilized to bring into fellowship and co-operation those whom society so often separates. In it are the little children within reach of those who would mould them for future service. The possibilities of the Church as a social force have not as yet been at all adequately realized. What is needed is leadership, and—not less important—those who will follow the new leadership which is developing within the Church itself. The Church needs students who shall discover for themselves “the simplicity which is in Christ,” and shall turn

from theological disquisition to the service of their fellow men in the spirit of Jesus, using the organization of the Church and the untold power of the co-operation of those whom it has gathered into its membership to bring in the fullness of the promise of the kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

“Lovest thou me?” “Feed my sheep.” “Come unto me.” “Go ye into all the world.” Looking to God for strength and wisdom, to Jesus for the ideal and the inspiration of life, we are called to go out in the spirit of justice and good will to protect the weak, to comfort the suffering, to help the unprivileged share the opportunities of the noblest manhood and womanhood, to do what we can by filling life full of love to establish at last on earth the City of God, of which the seers of every age have dreamed since man first began to believe in God or to love his neighbor.

“Oh, strengthen me, that while I stand  
Firm on the Rock, and strong in Thee,  
I may stretch out a loving hand  
To wrestlers with the troubled sea.

“Oh, teach me, Lord, that I may teach  
The precious things Thou dost impart;  
And wing my words, that they may reach  
The hidden depths of many a heart.

“Oh, fill me with Thy fullness, Lord,  
Until my very heart o'erflow  
In kindling thought and glowing word  
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.”

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1. Nothing is more significant socially and religiously, of better things to be than the drawing together of the labor unions and the churches. What can we do more than we are doing to complete this movement?

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